Title: Requests the Government to hike import duty on rubber and coconut to stablise the prices.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (MUVATTUPUZHA): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Finance who is present here. It is regarding the agricultural produce of Kerala, mainly rubber and coconut. The farmers are facing great stress because of the decrease in the prices of rubber and coconut. The rubber price has gone down from Rs. 65 to Rs. 22 and the price of coconut has gone down from Rs. 6 to Rs. 3 and even below Rs. 3.

My submission to the hon. Minister is that the duty on polyurethene which is used as the substitute for rubber which has come down from 80 per cent to 30 per cent, should be hiked with immediate effect so that rubber growers are benefited. The import of rubber should be stopped completely.

13.00 hrs

Recently, the Minister of Agriculture, Shri Sompal has declared the floor price. It is much below the reasonable price which a farmer should get. I would like to urge upon the Minister to review it and declare a new reasonable price for coconut.